

Edgecombe County Employee Newsletter

DECEMBER 2010



FROM THE COUNTY MANAGER

Now is the time of the year to enjoy time with loved ones and reflect on this year that has just about passed. With that in mind, I want to say that it is my honor and pleasure to work with such a great group of employees. Together we have faced challenges and weathered some difficult times as an organization. Some other county governments are now only getting a taste in this current economy of what we contend with all the time. Nevertheless, we have worked hard to keep our heads above water and to do our very best to serve the citizens of Edgecombe County. Though we sometimes get complaints from those we serve, I think overall we do a good job and provide good services.

I understand that a lot of what we do is thankless work, which is why I wanted to take this time to say Thank You!. I wish you all the happiest of holidays and look forward to embarking onto a new year with you all.

Don't Let the Bed Bugs Bite!

As you may have seen in the news, and hopefully not in your own home, bed bug infestations are on the rise. Some reports say they are up as much as 5,000 percent in urban areas. Reports are coming from hospitals, businesses, homes, busses, apartments and hotels. So is there a need to panic?

Well, the Centers for Disease Control reports that bed bugs are not known to carry diseases like some other pests. They are a nuisance to say the least, and can be very hard to get rid of. Having bed bugs are not related to poor hygiene, in that it only takes one bug to hitch a ride into your home to start an infestation. However, excessive clutter does give them more places to hide.

Bed bugs are stealthy and very good at hiding. They often hide in the seams of furniture, particularly mattress where they have quick nocturnal access to their prey. Their mouthparts have been adapted to feed on humans while inflicting very little pain. Most people don't know they have them until they see bite marks.

An infestation should be handled by a professional, but here are tips that may help keep them at bay:

- Wash your linens often and dry them in a hot dryer
- clean and vacuum under and behind furniture often
- hang clothes and coats in a closet far from the bed
- when staying in a hotel, place your luggage on the folding rack, keep clothes hanging inside your garment bag, and place your dirty clothes in the linen bag
- don't bring home a mattress that has been used by an unknown source
- remove clutter where bed bugs can hide

Under and in the seams of your mattress is the perfect place for bed bugs. There they can hide and have easy access to their sleeping food source.



DATES TO REMEMBER

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Dec. 6th – Commissioners Meeting 2:00 PM• Dec. 6th – Reception for outgoing commissioner T.C. Cherry and incoming Commissioner Donald Boswell 4:00 PM• Dec. 7th – Farm City Breakfast 7:30 AM• (No Dept. Head Meeting on Dec. 8th) | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Dec. 22nd – Dept. Head Meeting at 8:00 AM• Dec. 24th & Dec. 25th – Offices Closed for Christmas Holiday• Dec. 31st – Office Closed for New Year's Holiday |
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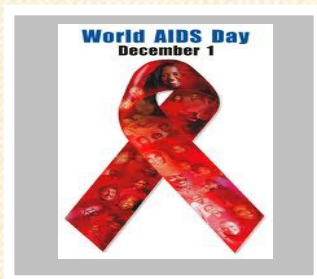
December 1st is World Aids Day

World Aids Day was started in 2004 and is an internationally recognized movement aimed at raising awareness and to promote access to treatment. The US Center for Disease Control reports that over 1 million people are living with HIV in the US and 1 in 5 of those is not aware of his/her infection. It is estimated that 56,300 Americans become infected with HIV each year. Startling statistics like these beg for ongoing awareness and education.

These alarming statistics should also get our attention right here in Edgecombe County. We have an HIV/STD rate that is higher than the state average. Some of that may be due to an aggressive testing effort. However, one case is one too many.

The Edgecombe County Health Department is working hard to tackle this issue. Free HIV testing is offered at both the Tarboro and Rocky Mount offices. Walk-ins are accepted on Thursday evenings from 5 pm – 7pm, 1st and 3rd Thursdays at the Tarboro Office and 2nd and 4th Thursdays at the Rocky Mount Office. You can also call to schedule an appointment between the hours of 8am – 5pm Monday through Friday. The Health Department is also in the process of starting a program to test inmates.

For more information on the Health Department's Programs, call 641-7511 or 985-4100.



SHIIP COUNSELORS WILL BE HERE TO HELP WITH MEDICARE PART D... SPREAD THE WORD!

Open enrollment for Medicare Part D Prescription Drug Plan (PDP) ends on Dec. 31st. So if you know someone who needs to sign up or make changes, now is the time. These decisions can be challenging, especially for our seniors. So spread the Word!

Medicare Prescription Drug Plan (PDP) EXPO

- Medicare Part D—Prescription Drug Plan Information for 2011
- Low Income Subsidy and NCRx Information & Enrollment Applications
- Verify your Current Plan is Still Your Best Choice
- Free One-on-One Counseling
- Learn What Plans are Available & Enroll
- Learn About Programs Available to Help During the Gap

**Please Bring A Completed
PDP Finder Tool!**

**We
Can
Help!**

Tools Available at Senior Centers, Office on Aging or by Calling 252-234-5959



For more information, go to
www.ncshiip.com

**December 9, 2010
Edgecombe County
Administrative Building
9:00 AM—1:00 PM**

Area Agency on Aging * Edgecombe County Office on Aging
Seniors' Health Insurance Information Program * Social Security Administration

WELLNESS LUNCH N LEARN

The Edgecombe County Wellness Program will sponsor its next Lunch n Learn on December 14th 1:00 – 2:00 on Heart Health. Lunch will be provided on behalf of the Wellness Program. If you are interested in attending the session, email carolynh@co.edgecombe.nc.us. Sign-up now; seating is limited to 25.



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How to Avoid Online Scams

With reports of long lines and some pushing and shoving, more people are turning to shopping online as a convenient alternative. Many stores are now offering great deals that last longer than the elusive deals offered on Black Friday.

NC Attorney General Roy Cooper has recently offered tips on how to *Avoid Scams and Surprises* while shopping online for the holiday season. He is urging online shoppers to take these steps to protect your money and your personal identification. For complete details, go to www.ncdoj.gov

- **Shop sites you know and trust.** Stick to established companies instead of fly-by-night websites.
- **Do your own price comparison.** Just because a website claims to beat prices at competitor sites or at brick-and-mortar retailers doesn't necessarily mean it's true.
- **Read the return policy carefully.** Some online retailers won't let you return items to their local stores, while others may charge a restocking fee or may not let you return certain items if they've been opened.
- **Know how to contact the company if problems arise.** Get the company's street address and telephone number and verify them before you place an order. Remember to be especially careful when shopping overseas sites, since no U.S. or state agency has legal authority over business deals with companies in other countries.
- **Consider paying by credit card.** If your order doesn't arrive or isn't what you expected, you can dispute it with your credit card company. Federal law also limits your liability to \$50 if your credit card number gets stolen.
- **Check site security** before you enter any payment information. Look for a lock icon on the website and a web address that starts with "https".
- **Ask when your order will arrive.** Internet and catalog shoppers are protected by the Federal Mail Order Rule. By law, a company is required to ship your order within the time stated. If you aren't given a delivery date, the company has 30 days to ship your purchase once your order is received.
- **Print out and save records of all online orders.** Keep the product description, price, online receipt, order number and customer service number. Save any emails the company sends you verifying your purchase or updating you on the status of an order.
- **Protect your identity.** Guard your Social Security, driver's license and bank account numbers when you shop online. Only share financial information via secure sites, never by email. Don't respond to unsolicited emails or telemarketing calls that ask for your personal information.



- Farm City Breakfast Dec. 7th at 7:30 AM
- Congratulations to Robin O'Neal in DMV on her recent marriage to Tim Cunningham on Nov. 20th – From Gloria Lyndaker
- Employees can easily set up a payment plan to avoid delinquent taxes. Call the Tax Collector's Office at 641-1296 for more info.
- Flu shots are still available at the Health Dept. Free to employees and covered dependents.
- Edgecombe County Solid Waste and Keep America Beautiful is sponsoring a Telephone Book Recycling Campaign. Within your offices, please collect your old phone books and place them in a box near your white paper recycling bins.

MERRY CHRISTMAS !

Edgecombe County Offices will be closed on Dec. 24th and 27th for the Christmas Holiday! Have a happy and safe Christmas Holiday!

